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CRISIS.

WE are not long with men or newspapers these days before we encounter the word CRISIS.

It is worth noting that this overworked word is defined by the dictionary as: *The time when a thing must either terminate, or take a new course.*

There are those who regard the world crisis that is now upon us as the coming of night—a termination. Others there are who believe that it may well prove to be the dawn of a new and better day.

We find comfort in the thought that the present crisis is but the latest of a series in the story of our race. It was critical for the world when the Son of God was crucified. Even to brave hearts that seemed to be the end of everything.

It is true to say that never since that time has there been a century that might not be spoken of as critical for mankind.

We don't know what Gladstone said in 1862. But we do know that Pitt, in his day, said: "There is scarcely anything around us but ruin and despair," and that Wilberforce bewailed the fact that the future was so dark and unsettled, he dared not marry, also that the good Earl Shaftesbury declared that nothing could save the British Empire from shipwreck. Coming to our own day, the "Manchester Guardian" recently stated that: "It may well be that the great evening of our civilisation is upon us." "Crisis: the time when a thing must terminate."

But let us take heart. It was not the end of everything when our Lord was rejected of men, and His body buried out of sight. The third day He rose again. Things then took a new course. With the advent of the Holy Spirit there came light and life, and healing and hope. We now speak of that time as the beginning of a new era.

Things did not terminate in the benighted 18th century. When the Wesleys and Whitefield appeared "a religious revival burst forth." Things took a new course, as they did in the 19th century. Even for Wilberforce things brightened: or was it that he became more daring? Anyhow, it is on record that he *did* marry after all.

As for the crisis of our day, it is for us to settle it in our hearts, whether it is to be met as an occasion for despair, or as a challenge to faith: whether it is to be the termination of everything worth while, or the taking of a new course which shall lead to a better order.

"Go to it." We may well make the nation's watchword our own, provided we give the words the right interpretation. Every man of us will now be asking himself what he can do to turn the crisis into blessing. What ought we to do? What must we do?

WE MUST KEEP OUR HEADS.

Self control is one of the marks of the believer. At a time of stress and strain, such as we are now experiencing, we can help ourselves and all around us by remaining self possessed and steady. "What man is there that is fearful and faint-hearted. Let him go and return unto his house, lest his brother's heart faint as well as his heart."

WE MUST KEEP OUR FAITH AND HOPE.

On a sinking ship in an angry sea, when all hope that they should be saved was taken away, Paul cried, saying: "Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: I believe God." His faith stood the severest test. So must ours. We have always maintained that there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved, that there is only One Who can judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off, and cause them to beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. We stand by that now.

Dr. Jacks recently declared: "I do not know how any man can look upon the world to-day without instantly seeing that it stands in need of some masterful, saving power. It is not reform, but rescue that is needed."

We must say, and keep on saying, that "God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this very Jesus Whom you have crucified." "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The last word concerning the destinies of nations and empires is not with dictators, but with the Lord Jesus Christ. "He must reign." "Whose I am, and Whom I serve."

WE MUST KEEP HEAVEN IN MIND.

Our Lord had much to say of His Father's house. Paul encouraged his fellow-pilgrims by the reminder that if their earthly tent was taken down, they had a home, made by no human hands, eternal in the heavens. In these days, when we are threatened as never before, we do well to speak of the life that is hid with Christ in God, and of the house which no bomb can destroy. "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid!"

WE MUST KEEP CLOSE TO ONE ANOTHER.

We remind ourselves that we are members of a Fellowship. The story is told of two British officers imprisoned in Turkey at the time of the Great War. Lest they should discuss plans for escape they were forbidden to speak to each other. They found strength by clasping hands held out between their beds in the darkness. It was the grip of an unseen friend that was their only sane experience in an insane world.

By the ministry of prayer—especially on Sunday mornings—and by kindly thought, by such service as we are able to render our fellows, and, maybe, through the silent messages of THE FRATERNAL, we may clasp hands, and be made to feel strong, in a night of doubt and sorrow.

WE MUST KEEP CLOSE TO GOD.

Let our fellowship be with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ: and let us pray unceasingly that the day of crisis shall turn out to be not a termination, but a time when things shall take a new course, for the glory of God and the good of the world.

J. R. EDWARDS.

THE WAR AND THE CHURCH.

(The address given upon this subject at the recent Pastoral Session by Robert Child is too long for publication in full. The following summary and extracts may help to indicate the drift of it.—E.B.)

THE fundamental challenge of the war to the Church is a call to her to rise to a new level of spiritual life. In that way alone can she master the moral and spiritual situation created by the war, and use it for God. Many people are asking to-day what the Church has to say about the war. The real question is not what the Church has to say, but what is she to be in the light of the spiritual crisis which the war reveals.

There is no simple answer to such a question. The principal requisite is that the Church should be herself. That is to say, she should make clear to herself and to others that she is, beyond everything else, a spiritual society, whose reason for existence lies in her commerce with the Unseen. Public worship is not just one of the activities of the Church which may be suspended at will, or at the command of the State. It is *the* activity of all others which at once indicates and preserves the Church's true character as the Body of Christ, and as His servant on earth. The maintenance of worship and prayer, in public and in private, is therefore an inescapable obligation upon every Christian, no matter what conditions may obtain, and our people should be encouraged so to regard it.

The worshipping Church is, moreover, in a special sense, the guardian and trustee of Christian Truth. I do not say the trustee of truth which men everywhere will immediately welcome. It is one of the tragedies of the present situation that many people do not recognise in Christian Truth the truth which they and the world need. They are eager for signs of the dawning of a better day, in which violence and bloodshed, poverty and unemployment, shall have been brought under control. But they do not connect these things with the Church or with Christianity. They regard the Christian creed as the relic of an outworn age. "The age of faith is dead," said a headmaster the other day. To which the reply of the Church must be that she, at any rate, is not dead, and that as long as she is alive the witness of faith to Christian truth shall not die either.

One such Gospel truth supremely relevant to present conditions is that of the sovereignty of God. In the striking Ency-

dical issued by the new Pope, the writer finds in the neglect of this truth the "fountain head deeply hidden, from which the evils of the modern State derive their origin. Both in private life and in the State itself, and moreover in the mutual relations . . . of country with country, the one universal standard of morality is set aside; by which we mean the natural law now buried away under a mass of destructive criticism and of neglect. This natural law reposes, as upon its foundation on the notion of God, the Almighty Creator and Father of us all, the supreme and perfect law-giver, the wise and just rewarder of human conduct."

Whether everyone would agree with this or not, the world is beginning to realise by bitter experience some of the dreadful consequences which flow from the doctrine that every nation is a law unto itself, and is answerable to no one beyond itself. Let such a supposition once be granted and the result, as we see it on the Continent to-day, is that no man's property or person is safe, no right or privilege secure. But where can men, in their weakness, find power to resist the dreadful implications of national sovereignty and rebuild civilisation on a better basis? Surely only in the knowledge of a Law more august than any made by man, and a Power before Whom even powerful nations must bow.

Moreover, it is not only in political affairs that the sovereignty of God needs fresh recognition. We need a new realisation of the fact that all the great spheres of human activity—Science and Art, Industry and Commerce, Recreation and Education—all lose their meaning and value when divorced from the purpose of God and regarded as ends in themselves. To reassert the sovereignty of God is the only thing which can finally secure that men to-day shall live in a universe and not a chaos. The Christian Church is the guardian of this truth.

Furthermore, this call to men to repent and to set God once more in the forefront of their reverence and regard is itself a message of good news, for the character of God revealed in Jesus Christ authenticates itself as loving and true. The weakness of so many plans made for the future of the world is that they pay too much attention to schemes of reconstruction, and too little to the radical sinfulness of human nature and its need of re-creation from above. The Gospel of God's redeeming grace in Jesus Christ is the good news of a living Saviour who can transform human lives and their relationships here and

now, and make all things new. The Gospel offers men no short-cut to a warless world, or even to one in which suffering and wrong do not still invade human happiness. But it offers men something far better than this. It brings to them the knowledge of One who suffers with men in all their tribulations, and can communicate to them the secret of rising above even failure and sin, and of winning victory from them.

Lastly, reverence for God gives us the clue as to the kind of spirit in which we are to set about the tasks of resisting evil and establishing good in the world. The view is freely expressed to-day that the present war would never have come about had a sharper punishment been inflicted upon the German people in 1918, and had the terms of peace been more rigorously enforced. That is an historical judgment which I do not propose to discuss. But it is a judgment which in one way or another will much influence men's minds in their attitude to our enemies in coming days. Hence, not the least of the elements of Christian truth which the Church must emphasise to-day is our duty not only to punish the wrongs which men do to one another, but also to forgive those who do them to us. No sensitive person can contemplate the wicked assaults of Nazi Germany upon helpless men, women and children without a profound sense of horror and indignation. But when a stop has been put to these things, as—please God—it will be, and the world liberated from such tyranny and cruelty, the problem of Germany and the Germans will still remain. Those who now have Hitlerism as their enemy, says Dr. Karl Barth, must “if they themselves wish to think in a Christian and not in a heathen way, keep steadily in view the fact that in this enemy they have to do with a sick man. Very firm but very merciful hands will be necessary The coming peace may have to be politically and militarily harder than the Versailles Treaty. If, however, everything is not again to be in vain, it will have to be wiser and juster—i.e. above all more solicitous.” The Church must put men on their guard now, before it is too late, against invasion by the spirit of hatred and bitterness, the only result of which would be to sow the seeds of new wars.

In conclusion, for the Church to be herself in the full sense means two other things. It means first, that she should be a living embodiment of the spirit of compassion, cherishing a real and living concern for the welfare of men, in a world where violence was never more widespread and more ruthless.

It means, finally, that she should hold fast to the spirit of hope. Christian people are to be—in Berdyaev's fine phrase—"Watchers for the Dawn." Darkness is indeed over the whole earth to-day. The dawn when it comes will find us living in a poorer world. The shape of things to come when we eventually see them may bear little relation to what we now desire. But these, after all, are secondary matters. The supreme thing, judged by Christian standards, is that God's will in Christ shall prevail, and that out of this furnace of trial and suffering shall come a generation better fitted to know and do His will in the earth. For that we must all work and watch and pray without ceasing.

I WAS AT DUNKIRK.

THE Editorial Board have asked me to write an article on the above subject. I was never actually at Dunkirk, but was taken off the beach a few miles further east. However, one must take the title in the spirit rather than the letter, and with that explanation we can commence.

For months we had passed a peaceful existence in France. Life was rather like that in an English garrison town in peace time. The enemy had doubtless planned that we should be lulled into security by this means, and his plan succeeded rather well.

It was a rude awakening when the Low Countries were invaded and we suddenly realised we were at war. Our men were in high spirits when we crossed the frontier into Belgium, and one heard on every side such expressions as, "Now we can get at him." I held a service on that first Sunday. It was not well attended, as most men were very busy, but the faithful few came, more serious than usual, and we commended ourselves to God.

Casualties among the Free Churchmen of our company were high, and of that little group two-thirds lie somewhere in Flanders. I buried them on the latter stages of our long trek and marked their graves. Whether we shall ever find them and erect headstones, I cannot tell, but their spirits are with God.

We advanced as far as Brussels, but by that time things were looking rather grim. The Belgian Army was badly broken up, the British and French were hopelessly outnumbered, and we began to withdraw. This is not the place to

tell that story, but it was a trying time for the troops. Whenever our infantry came to grips with the Germans they found themselves superior, yet they were constantly ordered to retire. They could not see the whole picture of the campaign, hence they were bewildered and disappointed.

We fell back to the French frontier, but there one German army was as near our rear as the other was to our front, so we suddenly had orders to change our direction towards the coast. We knew we were surrounded and thought it only a question of time before we were annihilated. The idea of being extricated by sea had not then occurred to us, but men were not depressed, and the questions one heard discussed were, "Does it mean the end of the Empire?" and "What will happen to England?"

However, as we got farther north we began to hear that boats were taking troops off at Dunkirk. The instinct of self-preservation reasserted itself and we began to ask, "Do we stand a chance?" We moved as we received orders, nearer and nearer the sea. I was attached to the R.A.S.C., who were responsible for feeding the Division. For a long time we had received no supplies from the base, so we had to get all the food possible from the countryside, which was very difficult indeed. I gave a good deal of time to assisting the Senior Supply Officer, and rather enjoyed myself acquiring groceries by the ton.

We arrived at the coast at 4 o'clock one morning, having had about one hour's sleep per night for the previous three nights, and rough-and-ready meals when we could. We came to the beach just east of La Panne, not far from Nieuport. There, at low tide, we found a ship, beached and full of ammunition. We spent the morning unloading the ship, and in the afternoon the C.O. and about 200 men boarded her and set sail. The Adjutant and the rest of us remained, being told there would be ships coming for us at night. While the ship was waiting to sail, several waves of German planes came over and made a determined effort to prevent our men getting away. They used high explosive and incendiary bombs, and also machine-gunned the men on the beach. But only three of our men were killed and about ten wounded. After the ship had sailed I buried the dead in the sand dunes.

We then sat down to await the promised ships. When darkness came we went near the water's edge and lay down.

Some tried to sleep, but there was a cold wind blowing, and our hungry and tired state was sufficient to drive sleep away. The hours dragged by with no signs of a ship, and as dawn broke our spirits sank. Our French liaison officer turned to me and said, "Well, Padre, I think the best we can hope for now is to be taken prisoner." But as the light increased we saw away in the west, towards Dunkirk, a host of vessels. The light which we thought our danger revealed our deliverance. We couldn't understand it, but began to march towards them. What a scene it was! Destroyers, cargo boats, paddle steamers and drifters. But there was no sign of life on any of them, and we did not know whether they were for us or against. However, first one rowing boat put out towards us and then others, and the work of embarkation commenced.

It was such a shallow beach that boats could not come right in and we had to wade out waist deep to get to them. Then the boat I was in was so overloaded that it became swamped and sank. At this point I lost what kit I had. Happily we were all ultimately picked up and finally landed in this country, wet, having lost all but what we were wearing, but grateful to be alive and home.

I can assure you that all you have heard of the splendid spirit of the men is true. The conditions were very bad, we were hungry and tired, pressed by a powerful enemy, bombarded from the air, and literally driven into the sea, yet no one showed fear. Even the wounded showed remarkable patience and cheerfulness. No praise is too high for the Navy. They shared their food with us, got wet through time after time hauling us out of the water, and kept making merry with jokes all the time, although at frequent intervals death was raining out of the sky. While this is the spirit of Britain, defeat is out of the question.

One more word as a kind of postscript. Our unit reassembled in the South-west, and by Sunday, June 9th, most of us had re-gathered. I held a parade service for Free-churchmen, but the Company Commander, who is C. of E., said he would like to come and it was to be a united service. He said we all ought to thank God together after such an experience. Afterwards a corporal said to me, "I'm not a devout man, but after this I want to go to every service I can."

Men's hearts have been moved. It is for us to use our opportunities.

G. H. T. BLAKE.

A BUSINESS MAN TALKS TO MINISTERS.

(Notes of an address to the Baptist Board on Wednesday,
7th May, 1940.)

I—THE MINISTER'S CALLING.

I WAS brought up in a home where the ministry was held in high regard. The minister was the man of God, called by Him to a particular church until He gave release. You will therefore understand my dislike of the modern tendency to short, and still shorter, pastorates, and my inability to become reconciled to the Time Limit. My observation of its working suggests that it has not been for the good of our churches, and that it is something alien to our denominational experience.

The minister starts with a real advantage. Laymen enter their callings for various reasons—succession to a father's business, introduction of a friend—and many would be as happy, or happier, in other professions. Not so the minister, there is nothing else for him. He heard an inward call that could not be resisted, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel," and he has no right to remain in the ministry if that Divine "setting apart" fades from memory.

The ministry is the highest vocation. The minister is more than a glorified layman. His life is given to service of the noblest and most satisfying kind. Every minister has occasions when his soul experiences deep rapture. A business man has the reward of contented clients, but that is nothing to the joy the minister experiences in winning and teaching disciples. His political opinions and his observations on twentieth century economics are of little value; but all-important is what he can tell his people of the Eternal and how to overcome the temptations that assail, and live the Christian life. Laymen are, I think, entitled to expect ministers to be specialists in the spiritual realm. They have far more time than the layman for "receptive and absorbing communion with God," and their intimacy with the Master should be so unbroken that, as was said of Thomas Chalmers, "their shrine is with them everywhere."

II—THE MINISTER AND HIS DEACONS.

Most ministers have tact, but some have temperaments: an awkward deacon may have a much more awkward minister. The diaconate on which I have served for thirty years has included men of varied gifts, callings, financial resources and

political opinions. Some rarely read a book, others could go to their shelves and find in Boreham the purple passage that had strangely illumined the visiting preacher's sermon. One thing binds us together: not the desire for office, but the desire to plod at our minister's side for the good of the church.

A diaconate should represent all sections of a church, not the well-to-do and best educated only; and deacons should never be permitted to forget that their office involves them in deep spiritual responsibilities.

The normal relationship of Baptist ministers and deacons is one of confidence and cordiality. For this to be maintained absolute truthfulness is essential, e.g. if a minister delivers another man's children's address, and narrates the various incidents as though they occurred to him personally in the preceding week, he is acting dishonestly. It is no disgrace to introduce such an address with "I heard" or "I read."

I suggest that pastoral visitation of deacons and their families should not be overlooked, and the minister is wise who remembers that gratitude is due to deacons' wives for their many sacrifices.

I also suggest that a minister should be slow to take offence. Unlike ministers, not all deacons have had training in exactness of expression, and, when tired after a fatiguing day at business, it is fairly easy for a deacon to say something that could have been expressed differently. It may be difficult, but, instead of being suspicious of such a brother, it is better to attribute the best to him, and to be thoroughly loyal to all the deacons in word and in tone.

III—THE MINISTER AND HIS WORK.

Although the Church is not a business, it remains true that the Church is the minister's job. Humanly speaking its success depends more on him than on anyone else. Departmental managers can do little if the managing director slacks and lacks vision: likewise deacons and members can be as devoted as possible, but, if the minister fails to give the lead his position requires and neglects to pull his weight, the spiritual glow of the Church will be difficult to maintain. Some simple, perhaps commonplace, lessons from business life may be suggestive for church life.

I am proud of my calling. I believe that insurance serves the community. How much more should that be true of the

ministry. The Church is greater than clubs and lodges, and kindred institutions. These may be excellent but they are on the circumference: the Church is at the centre. There is far too much cheap criticism of the Church at anniversary gatherings in order to win unthinking applause. There is something right with the Church of God; and to-day's members compare favourably with those of earlier generations. They come to church because they want to; many of the past attended because it was the custom. Baptists should be proud of their churches, of their history, and of their world wide witness, and not be afraid to say so.

I need to plan my time and work. It is easy to dissipate time. Compared with laymen who have to leave home washed and dressed for their offices, at 8 or 8.30, ministers are at a disadvantage. It may be possible to study in carpet slippers and a sports coat, but it is not a great distance from slovenly attire to a slovenly mind.

I need to look after my own business, or it will soon go to my competitors. It is related of Dr. McLaren that, when he was at Southampton, he was invited to services up and down Hampshire. He declined most: "For," said he, "I have a plot of my own to cultivate." It is right for a minister to give help to brother ministers, and to take a reasonable share in Association and Missionary work, but his own church should have a big first in his life and thought: his own church is his job.

I can't afford to neglect my existing connections. It is no use to forget a client until a renewal premium is due. Service to him should be given gladly and with a generous hand. Likewise, it is no use for the minister to think that all is done that is needful when he has given the right hand of fellowship to the new member. That is but the beginning. Teaching, and training, and the opportunity of service must follow.

Intensive cultivation of existing members and adherents should give rich rewards to a minister. G. H. Morrison devised "ingenious ways of being kind." You may say: "What do you mean by 'intensive cultivation'?" Well, let us start with the families of the members. Do you know their birthdays, and do you send a card or make a call and thus show that their minister is interested? Do you follow their school careers and rejoice with them in educational and sporting successes, and do you give the word of encouragement in times of difficulty? When the son leaves for college, is a letter from the minister

awaiting him, or does he receive no communication during the years of absence? How many of you have written to your Sunday School scholars who are evacuated, and to those giving them hospitality, and to your church members who are away?

Do you keep a list of the members you have married, and do you visit them on the anniversary, or in some other way let them know you have not forgotten? Do you know and enter into your members' hobbies and interests? "The good shepherd knoweth his own sheep *by name*," and a twentieth century translation of that would be "*by their hobbies, and work, and interests.*" What are you doing for the men of the church who are in the Forces? In addition to your own regular letter, have you organised a writing squad among the members? Some church magazines almost suggest that the editors are unaware that boys of their church are in khaki. "Alexander Whyte's vivid imagination was constantly linked with the lives and interests of his hearers. He tried to know all that was going on in the homes of his people, and would go in to conduct family worship the night before the son left

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home, or give an invitation to supper for the Sunday when he came back."

The foregoing indicates what I mean by "intensive cultivation of existing members and adherents": such is within the possibility of any minister, and work of that nature would go far to eradicate the need for an erasure column.

I need to remember the importance of little things. It costs nothing to be courteous, but it brings rich rewards. If a minister sees three ladies talking and he shakes hands with two and absentmindedly overlooks the third, he has himself to blame if that one feels deliberately slighted.

"Little fish are sweet" and the smallest recommendation or introduction should not be overlooked. Some years ago when the housing problem was at its worst, a country deacon wrote an apparently unimportant letter to two London churches saying that he wished to move to the metropolis and had difficulty in finding a house. The minister and secretary of the first took the matter in hand, and found a likely house; the second sent a postcard saying they could do nothing. After settling at the first church, one of the country deacon's earliest acts was to give £50 to the church's renovation scheme as a thankoffering, and the minister and secretary soon realised that, unknowingly, they had helped a man whose income was on the four-figure level.

I need to keep fresh at my job. The literature and books of 30 years ago will not serve to-day. Ministerial problems were never more complex than in these days of popular education, newspapers and reprints of great books, and a minister cannot get through on Matthew Henry and Spurgeon. God's revelation is continuous and it did not cease with those preachers, great though each was for his own age. Remembering the facilities offered by Dr. Williams' Library and the various County Libraries, there is no excuse for a minister who fails to see the latest and best books in theology and general literature.

In closing, I return to the spiritual. The strength of the minister (and of all Christian workers) is in the secret place. Reality and sincerity are basic in any man's relationship with God. If the minister's soul life is rooted and grounded in God, he will induce the sense of God in all his work. He who would speak of the Mysteries of Divine Grace must spend much time with those Mysteries.

SEYMOUR J. PRICE.

"GO TO IT, BAPTISTS!"

Notes of an Address given at a Northern Group L.B.A. and L.B.M.U. Garden Party, June 8th, 1940.

THERE is much in the way the country has faced and risen to the present situation to point the way for Baptists. At long last we are, as a nation, wide awake to the reality, extent and power of the forces of wickedness arrayed against us, and the facts are more serious than we supposed. In spite of prophetic voices crying in the wilderness, we nursed for years the illusion that human nature was incapable of the barbarities that are now a commonplace in every day's news. Once fully roused, however, the nation has been swift to act. Political ranks are closed, cherished liberties have been willingly delegated, fierce concentration has replaced lethargy, half-measures and inefficiency are condemned, fifth columnists rounded up.

A recent "Baptist Times" article on John Newton in search of a church quotes him as saying that Baptist churches "seem not calculated for general usefulness." Hence he joined the Church of England, although convinced of the weakness of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration! I can understand an Englishman wanting to join a church that IS capable of general usefulness, and I am sure Baptists are such, IF they will do what the nation has done, open their eyes to facts and act accordingly. I am not sure we yet realise the power and extent of the forces of evil in the world, or the defects in organisation and spirit from which we suffer. We sing with gusto the optimistic hymns in our Revised Hymnal, as if the Kingdom of God were just round the next corner, and comfort ourselves with the local advances revealed in B.M.S. and other reports, without setting them over against the numbers and resources of the enemy, or plotting our outposts on the whole world-wide battle-line. Until we do this the maximum of effort cannot be achieved, for the occasion for it will not be evident. We must see, with the Apostle, that our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers.

Alert to the stern realities of the struggle we must face the facts therefore of our own inner life as a Denomination. For long there has been a ferment of deep concern beneath the smooth surface of our Baptist life, that we are not sufficiently effective for the task of bringing nearer the Kingdom of God.

Under the title "If I were Dictator of the Baptists," several of our most experienced and gifted leaders have written in the "Baptist Times" of changes they would make in our worship and organisation. Their articles should be gathered together and published separately for the consideration of every church in our community. Big ideas are taking shape, the merging of the Baptist Union and the B.M.S., the placing of all the ministry under the same conditions of service, a larger measure of central control of churches and, it is hoped, a more definite and active interest in the political expression of our faith in the Kingdom of God. To bring these into operation will make us fitter as a Denomination to play our part in the great struggle, but it needs the same kind of response as the nation has already made, the closing of our ranks, the willing delegation of cherished liberties, a fuller concentration on essentials, a greater intolerance of muddle and inefficiency, a more catholic spirit.

It is my conviction that the North London churches can do much to prepare the way and give a lead towards these urgent reforms, and the pressure of war conditions may help to increase our pace. Already we are a closely-knit community. Many churches have been formed from others in the Group. All of us have members who came from other North London churches. Indeed the movement of Baptists in North London is usually within our area, and it is not uncommon for members of several different churches to be living in the same road. Let us begin by thinking of ourselves as the Baptist Church in North London. Why not have one Church Manual for all our members with an indication as to which local community they belong? It would be an impressive and encouraging document. Why not look on all the ministers as ministers of every church? There are great possibilities here for added effectiveness in visitation, in teaching, in social and political representation. And let us keep in mind and in sympathy the larger ideas and create the spirit for their early achievement. We sometimes quote John Robinson for the conviction that "the Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from His Word." May that new and greater light not have as much reference to organisation as to theology?

A. J. KLAIBER.

"REFLECTIONS ON RECENT READING."

IT is very significant that our newspapers so frequently quote Bunyan and Shakespeare, Milton and Cromwell. We are a fortunate people to have such deep wells of spiritual and moral challenge and comfort. Our literature is both a source of inspiration and a token and symbol of our national spirit. Our past becomes vocal and its ringing voice lifts our hearts and nerves our spirits. Reading creates morale.

Reading in war-time, however, should base itself on the Bible. Milton, Cromwell and Bunyan owed much to the Scriptures, while Shakespeare also was their debtor. For myself I am once again steadily reading the Bible from the beginning, chapter by chapter, and verse by verse. My aim is to see the modern situation and the war in deep and profound relation to the tragic history of Israel. In the historical and prophetic chapters of the Bible we have the most successful effort ever made "to justify the ways of God to man." These pages lay bare the deepest secrets of the heart of man as in the sight of the Judge of all the earth, and they proclaim an interpretation of the events of national and individual life in terms of the everlasting redeeming purpose of the Creator.

Subsidiary to Bible study, but related to its great themes, comes historical reading. As a preacher whose persistent aim is to see the Gospel in relation to the whole of life, I turn inevitably to the study of life as it is unfolded in ordinary events, and as it breaks into the tragic agony of war. Trevelyan, Fisher, and others, have the master touch. Cromwell has a fascination for me and I have gained greatly from reading his *ipsissima verba*. Through the smoke of Carlyle's reverberations I have caught glimpses of his tremendous figure, at once the master and the servant of his age. In Thomas Hardy's "Dynasts" events and men, tragedy and comedy, riddle and answer, are fused into poetic unity, imaginatively powerful and profound.

But history is not enough, and in days like these the great issues that theology seeks to understand, state and interpret, become more and more urgent and pressing. I must confess that Calvin and Denney are more to my liking than many others whose spirit is more sentimental and whose minds are less masculine. There can be no salvation in a weak-kneed God, either for 1940 or any other century. The Father is the Judge,

and the Creator is a consuming though cleansing fire. I commend Dorothy Sayers' little book, "Creed or Chaos?" and her brave plea for dogma. Theology may be the queen of the sciences and not the Cinderella, but she should be as much at home in the kitchen as in the palace, in the mill as in the throne-room.

I make two further references. First, one of my most treasured books is a collection of "War Letters of Fallen Englishmen," written between 1914 and 1918, and it is a deeply moving experience now in 1940 to be receiving correspondence from some thirty boys of my church. My generation had fondly and daringly hoped that the war we had won would be a final victory over war itself, but here is yet another sacrificed generation as brave as ever and as noble. Second, I commend "The needs of Youth," by A. E. Morgan, a King George's Jubilee Trust report. It should be read by all who are interested in the new Youth Committees and in the Government Circular 1486. A younger generation is rising in our midst. Whether conscription will claim them later on or not, the immediate issue is their relation to the Church and voluntary organisations, to the State and the community. Adolescents and social patterns is a pressing and absorbing theme.

My war-time reading therefore works back into the distant and nearer past, and forward into the immediate and ultimate future. It seeks to disentangle the chain of actual events; to understand the men and women who are involved, and to relate the whole human story to the redemptive purpose of God in Christ.

J. B. MIDDLEBROOK.

BOOK NOTICE.

A FOURTH and revised edition of Dr. William Brown's "Psychology and Psychotherapy" (E. Arnold, 12s. 6d.) is cordially to be welcomed. No English writer on the subject speaks with greater authority, or can express himself with greater lucidity. A new chapter on "Psychological problems of later life," has suggestive material for more than one sermon, and the same is true of many other chapters. The book is not primarily or particularly written for ministers, but in its discussion of many of the practical and ethical problems with which ministers have to deal it is exceedingly helpful and suggestive. All the more so because, unlike so many modern works

on the subject, it is "on the side of the angels." Its author believes that psychology must work in close alliance with philosophy and true religion if it is to make its most valuable contribution to human well-being. He also stresses the wider implications of the subject in the domains of political science and international relationships, and claims that psycho-therapy is the handmaid of truth in human relations, and in the long run truth will prevail. Altogether a most valuable and readable book.

PERCY AUSTIN.

Our late editor, Percy Austin, wishes to thank the many men who have written to him in recent months, and to express his regret that he has not been able to reply to them all individually.

NOTES BY THE SECRETARY.

ANNUAL MEETING. The area of the City Temple was well filled for our annual meeting, presided over by Dr. Percy Evans, who conducted the opening worship. An important committee report was excellently presented by T. J. Whitman, following which, the officers and committee were re-elected. In connection with the retirement from office of Percy Austin, warm appreciation was expressed of his long service to the Fellowship, and it was noted, with satisfaction, that he was to be co-opted to the committee. Thanks were also expressed to W. H. Pratt for his work as treasurer and librarian, and a welcome given to H. M. Angus who has taken over the work of the latter office. A temporary editorial board for the FRATERNAL was appointed.

After the business, R. L. Child spoke on the "War and the Church"—a valuable and impressive utterance, which in a shortened form is published as an article in this issue.

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The opportunity for our annual meeting was made possible by the kindly hospitality of the B.M.S., and while we are grateful, we hope that future Assembly programmes will allow proper place and time for our Fellowship gathering. It was felt by some that it would be better to meet at Bloomsbury in the future, so as to avoid the inconvenience caused to the congregation awaiting to enter the City Temple for the Missionary sermon.

The Assembly as a whole was surprisingly well attended and the meetings were marked by optimism and enthusiasm. The B.M.S. annual members' meeting was one of the best ever held, while on the Wednesday evening the great gathering of young people thronged the City Temple and Lecture Hall. Generally there was much reason to thank God and take courage.

We give a hearty welcome to Gwyneth Hubble, and are glad that Violet Hedger now has another woman to keep her company in the ranks of our membership.

Hearty congratulations to the Rev. and Mrs. W. A. Findlay on their golden wedding. May the happy pair be spared for a long time yet to come.

The stress and strain of war-time falls heavily on our churches and ministers, and nowhere more so than upon those in our East Coast towns. Let us remember our brethren in prayer especially at the Sunday morning watch.

NEW MEMBERS.

WE are pleased to record a large accession to our membership and accord a hearty welcome to those whose names follow. If any has been inadvertently omitted, the Secretary asks that in wrath mercy may be remembered. A. J. Barnard, J. Begg, J. G. Bowen, P. E. Boyd, H. Bryant, S. Collis, A. B. Crabtree, G. H. Davies, Sir H. Dunnico, A. C. Durman, K. E. Dykes, S. T. Ellis, V. C. Evans, E. R. Fowles, L. H. Fraser, T. J. Hamer, B. F. Hardy, E. J. Hayward, C. F. Hitchings, A. B. Jestice, A. J. Klaiber, H. J. Leach, P. MacIntyre, S. Madden, C. B. Mason, N. S. Moon, C. Moore-Crispin, S. G. H. Nash, H. B. Roberts, C. H. C. Robins, C. H. Robinson, R. C. Rowsell, A. Stockwell, S. E. H. Terrell, G. L. Thomas, A. J. S. Thomson, J. Tinker, A. E. Wheeley, W. E. Wilding, A. E. Williams, S. H. Wing, A. E. Wood, E. H. Worstead, E. W. Wright, R. W. Phillips.

Our membership amounts to about one thousand. Now for the second thousand!

SYDNEY G. MORRIS,
Secretary.

A MATTER OF URGENCY.

THE evacuation—compulsory or otherwise—of many of our seaside towns has created an extremely critical situation for many of our ministers and churches. Membership has been reduced to vanishing point, congregations depleted, and what were, only a few months ago, strong churches, are threatened with extinction, at least for the time being.

This situation causes much anxiety to many of our brethren, some of whom may have to leave even house and home and can rescue only a fraction of their belongings. There is no question here of complaint; on the contrary, our men everywhere square their shoulders and share the fate which has come to thousands, with a cheery courage which is an example to all. As a Fellowship, however, we would first of all express our profound sympathy with the churches and then would try to do what we can to help our brethren. We appeal to our members generally to try to help (a) by bringing their influence to bear on churches in their neighbourhood who are without pastors, to effect a speedy settlement and if possible to give an opportunity to a man from a church in the affected areas; (b) to invite a man from these areas to a temporary pastorate where perhaps the minister is away on active service, and (c) to urge a church which may in various ways have benefited by the war conditions to bear the burden of some other church which has been so adversely affected. In making this direct appeal we desire only to strengthen the hands of the Superintendents, who together with the Secretary of the Union has this matter so much at heart.

The present emergency emphasises the need of some modification of our Denominational system, by which not only a crisis like the present can be the more effectively dealt with, but also the whole question of ministerial settlement in normal times.

SYDNEY G. MORRIS.

SUBSCRIPTIONS, PLEASE!

OUR treasurer sent a cheering report to our recent committee—membership has increased and men on the whole have remitted their subscriptions. There are, however, a good many still outstanding, and for these he makes an appeal. Time and expense are involved in writing personally for these, and we hope this reminder will make that effort unnecessary. Be a man and pay up!

ANY COMPLAINTS?

"I AM a padre. My job is to look after the fellows who come to our camp from the churches represented on the United Board. I am most anxious to welcome them on their arrival, or soon after; and to make them feel that in me they have a friend. I could introduce them not only to men of kindred minds, but to local churches and to the homes of good people. It is a rare thing for me to receive word from a minister to say that one of his boys has set out for our camp. This is unfair to me, and worse for the boy."

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"I am a minister in a reception area. Many Baptist children, I understand, have come to our town and neighbourhood. A letter of introduction from their minister or Sunday School superintendent would mean much to me and more to the youngsters. Several men have forgotten to write that letter. Can you wake them up?"

.

"I have written to ministers in reception areas asking them to call on our children who have been evacuated to their neighbourhood. The majority have readily obliged. One or two have not done so. They have not even acknowledged my letter. The names of the defaulters should be published in next year's Baptist Handbook. What do you think about it?"

The names should be removed from the accredited list.
—E.B.

.

"Ministers who, on account of advancing years, retire from the pastorate, should be invited to retain their membership of the Baptist Union and their particular association. They should not be expected to pay an annual subscription for the privilege. If it be said that the amount is only a few shillings, the reply is that a few shillings represents a big slice of an old age pension."

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Members of THE FRATERNAL are invited to send in their complaints (if any). No guarantee is given that all grievances shall be published. For one thing paper is rationed. Nor can we promise that every crooked place shall be made straight.

Let it be understood, however, that this page is at the disposal of those of us who feel that things are not what they ought to be, and that something should be done about it. Names of writers will not be mentioned. If no complaints reach us we shall presume that in the world in general, and in the Baptist ministry in particular, all is well.

A. J. BURGOYNE.

THE death of A. J. Burgoyne at the zenith of his manhood, removes from our ranks a gifted minister and a brother beloved. He did excellent work in his churches and bore the heavy burden of his last pastorate with patient and uncomplaining courage. In the L.B.A. the B.U. and the B.M.S. he served most faithfully, and few busy ministers have been so assiduous in their committee work; a loyal son of Bristol, his college, and Bristol men everywhere, share deeply our general loss. He leaves a treasured memory and his unexpected home-going is a call to us all to work while it is day, for in an hour when we think not there may come to us also the post from the Celestial City.

S.G.M.

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EDITED BY J. C. CARLILE, C.H., C.B.E.

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